

AN INJURIOUS MEMBRACID

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The Membracidæ are usually, and as a rule rightfully classed as innoxious, the only case of any degree of importance heretofore recorded against them being as enemies of potatoes, although they are frequently found on fruit and shade trees with no apparent ill effects.

In 1921, while passing through the Canal Zone, Dr. James Zetek, Government Entomologist in charge of the Biological Station, informed me that a membracid was infesting various shrubs and trees in countless numbers in the vicinity of Panama, with very injurious effect. They were so plentiful that they covered the bark of the twigs and branches to such an extent that the bark could not be seen. Dr. Zetek obtained several photographs of some of the infested trees, three of them accompanying this account. As it is unusual to find a membracid on a list of injurious insects it seems opportune to place this occurrence on record.

Amyot and Serville in 1843 described this insect (Hemipteres, p. 543, pl. 10, fig. 1) as *Physoplia crassicornis* and *Physoplia nigrata*, since when it has been redescribed and figured many times under various names, but now is known as *Umbonia crassicornis*. It is frequently seen in Mexico, Central and South America.

PLATE VII

- FIG. 1. *Umbonia crassicornis* in the several stages.
FIG. 2. Near view of infested branches.
FIG. 3. A badly infested tree.